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Mildred

Yours truly
D. W. Langenbach

MILDRED

BY

JOSEPH W. LANGENBACH

AUTHOR OF
"Howard-Maybelle", "My Weapon is that Dream", "My Fair Ideal", "The Rose and the Snowball", "The Rejoicing of My Soul"

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Josephine

DEDICATED

To one whom I rocked in the cradle,
To the first born for me to love,
The child of a beautiful mother,
Who has gone to her home above.

To my only, my precious daughter
Let me bow as I meditate,
And mid emblems of love in showers
This production I dedicate.

I carried a babe to the altar,
To the loving arms of the dean;
Whispered my name in the feminine,
She was christened as Josephine.

CHAPTER I

In eighteen hundred and fifty-two
Tears were shed in the fatherland
For Heinrich, a son of royal birth
Was holding his bride by the hand.

And was standing before his father
With her, wed for better or worse,
And was asking from him a blessing,
But instead he received a curse.

A curse was pronounced upon Heinrich,
A curse upon Heinrich's young wife
With a wish that sorrow and trouble
Should be heaped upon them through life.

And a father's heart was not softened,
Though the tears were falling like rain,
And the two bound in love together
Before him, were pleading in vain.

But that old father's wrath was kindled
And the flames devoured and tore
All his reason and better judgment
To return to him never more.

Void of love and of understanding,
He drove from his home and his life
To meet no more this side of the tomb
His son, Heinrich, and Heinrich's wife.

But to Heinrich in tribulation
An invisible, pointing hand
Directed him over the waters
To America, Freedom's land.

Where the eagle will soar forever,
Where forever stars and stripes wave,
Where nation bows not to kings enthroned
But to those who are good and brave.

CHAPTER II

In the panorama before me
I can see a tie torn in twain,
I can see a link that is broken
And affections forever slain.

I can see the innocent, tortured,
Grinning faces watching them weep;
I can see the lash of the mighty
Into human flesh cutting deep.

I can see a stream that is flowing
Looking over the tide of years,
And I weep, because its origin
And its source is from human tears.

MILDRED

I can see a wife that is clinging
To her husband but newly wed;
I can see how sadness reigns within
Two hearts from which gladness has fled.

I can see a grey haired father stand,
I can read his features tonight,
One who is just in his own conceit,
But unjust in his Maker's sight

I can see a grand old German town
On the banks of the river Rhine,
And valleys I see with trees of fruit
While the hillsides are bearing wine.

MILDRED

I see a mansion with towers high
In a garden of perfume rare;
I see a fond mother shedding tears
For her son is no longer there.

And looking down the river I see
A home humble and desolate,
For the father's pride and mother's hope
Hath gone forward to meet her fate.

Now the curtain falls on my vision
While my heart is still filled with pain,
But swiftly again it is lifted,
And the scene is a railway train.

Carrying Heinrich and Heinrich's wife
To the mighty Atlantic shore.
Tomorrow they say a last farewell
To a land they will see no more.

And on the face of the mighty deep,
On the deck of a ship I see
The brave boy Heinrich beside his wife,
And a shadow falls over me.

CHAPTER III

I would never censure the dreamer
Who builds castles grand in the air,
For in fancy he floats above us
And the world to him is more fair.

I would never censure the dreamer,
Who rides on the clouds in the sky,
Who weeps not because he is mortal,
Nor doth question the reason why.

I would bow low before the dreamer,
His hand would I clasp in my own;
And look backward through all the ages
To behold the known and unknown.

And to fairyland with the dreamer
On excursions I'd love to go,
To bring back the perfume of roses
As a balm to all earthly woes.

I would visit all tribes and nations
I would linger with the oppressed,
Then return to my native country,
The States, which from Heaven are blest.

And on American, Hawkeye soil,
I would build there a tower grand,
And from it unfurl the stars and stripes,
The pride of our liberty land.

The flag for which our fathers did die,
And to which their sons will be true,
The flag for which our lives we would give
Clad in garments of union blue.

The flag which providence lifted up,
That those who are sorely oppressed
Might behold the grandeur, faith and love
Of our Union and then be blest.

A Union strong and mighty in war;
We cling not to steel that will rust.
For behold, we have upon our coin
Stamped the motto, "In God We Trust."

This motto we wield as our weapon,
So long as within us is life.
It is our consolation in peace
And our mighty weapon in strife.

CHAPTER IV

Let me sing of the mighty river
That flows from the north to the south,
And tell that its laughing waters kiss
Their banks from its source to its mouth.

The beautiful father of waters
As it onward flows to the sea
With its gentleness and its grandeur
Doth not fail to inspire me.

On the banks of the Mississippi
I have often sat down to dream,
And the breezes laden with perfume
Fanned my brow, as they crossed that stream.

And beautiful lessons were taught me.
They came floating to me in the air,
And I cast the trials and troubles
Of my heart in the river there.

With the lullaby of contentment
I was cradled within my fate,
For I learned from the mighty river
What it means to be truly great.

And the memories of my childhood
Are crowding around me today.
May those memories live forever,
May they with me abide, I pray.

For in fancy I hear the stories,
That I heard at my mother's knee,
And the benediction so solemn
Of my father falls over me.

In my dreams I have wandered backward,
For this censure me not, I pray,
To view the panorama of life
E'er my soul was confined in clay.

To view the land my ancestors trod
Yea, the land under German reign,
To rejoice with them in happiness
And to weep with them when in pain.

To behold a mighty human sea
Young and old to the ocean fly;
To see them gather into the ships
To the fatherland say goodbye.

To see them strong as giants of old
Perhaps fifty long days or more,
The fatigue of voyage enduring
To reach the American shore.

There to sing of the nation's glory,
There to breathe the air of the free;
To gather sunbeams of liberty
And to waft them over the sea.

CHAPTER V

One day with my feet on Hawkeye soil,
On the banks of the stream I love,
With the golden sunbeams around me
And the silver lined clouds above.

In my fancy I heard sweet music,
And saw beings in purest white,
While a voice like the rolling thunder
Was commanding me, saying,
'Write."

I fell on my kness, crying, "Master,
Is this real or is it a dream?"
When a beautiful snow white fairy
Came to beckon me down the stream.

MILDRED

On the waves of the gentle river
We drifted, the fairy and I,
And my heart leaped with joy and rapture,
Because of the scenes we passed by.

We laughed and we danced in the sunshine,
While our barge was floating along,
And we praised the star spangled banner,
And our Uncle Samuel in song.

And we praised the father of waters,
Civilizer, of the great west,
But we fell asleep in the gloaming
For He cradled us on His breast.

That sleep was a vision beautiful,
Presenting the past unto me,
And brought to me from the realms above
More love for the land of the free.

Oh, beautiful sleep that charms the soul,
With the power of love divine,
That bathes us in streams of happiness,
Where we heed not the fleeting time.

Oh, that voyage upon the river,
From the Hawkeye state to its mouth,
Today I can read the records still,
That were made in the sunny South.

Would that I possessed fields of roses,
That were reared with the greatest care,
To New Orleans I would take them,
On the landings to scatter there.

On the landings where in years gone by
From the foreign lands with their God,
Came the pioneers of our country,
To tread the American sod.

Three cheers for the old fashioned vessels,
Three cheers for the brave knights of old,

Three cheers for the love in their bosoms,
Which will never, never grow cold.

Three cheers for our fathers who feared not,
As they took their lives in their hands,
And faced a most dangerous voyage,
To possess our beautiful lands.

Three cheers for their noble ambition,
Of which they possessed a surplus,
Which made them prosper in freedom's land,
And was handed over to us.

MILDRED

Three cheers for one youthful couple
pure,
Who came under the sails of white,
My Master's calling I will obey,
And of them endeavor to write.

Endeavor to wield my trembling pen,
May Providence guide it for me,
Help me to tell of this youthful pair,
That came to the land of the free.

All hail to their loyalty in love,
All hail to their power in strife,
Let us gather laurels to scatter
Upon Heinrich and Heinrich's wife.

CHAPTER VI

I would cast a stone in the river,
Where the waters are calm and blue,
Near a little cottage which sheltered
My ideal of lovers two.

I would then watch the ringlets forming,
Would watch them as they died away,
And would call it a mighty symbol,
Of the sinking of mortal clay.

When mortal stands on limbs of conceit,
When the time doth come for its fall,
It will sink to the very bottom
The ringlets will die, that is all.

MILDRED

I would weep o'er sinking mortal clay,
The garb of a poor withered soul,
That lives to undo or mourn its wrong,
While the world continues to roll.

So, while standing beside the river,
I would look towards over the sea,
And call to that father, "Come hither
E'er thy pride will turn to smite thee.

"Come hither, kneel at the feet of him
Of thy own flesh and blood, thy son,
Lay thy lips in American dust,
Atone for the wrong thou hast done."

But from the east would there come no
voice
To roll over the billows wild,
Providence chastened a father there,
But Providence smiled on his child.

And beautiful showers of blessing,
Fell down from the heavens above,
To that home by the gentle river,
And made it a cottage of love.

A cottage where love supremely reigned,
Twain were loyal there, not in vain,
Honest toil by day brought rest by
night.
Wealth never came with its pain.

Conceit never came to turn their hearts
From the pathway their feet should
tread,
A precious picture, behold it now,
Living virtue, but vice is dead.

Living virtue, its banners are waving,
Living virtue, long may it reign,
Living virtue, it makes us better,
It drives away sorrows and pain.

Those Biblical truths none can alter,
They are grander than shining steel,
Oh, study them over, dear reader,
They will grandeur to you reveal.

They will teach you that sins of fathers,
Will follow their children's career,
But that wielding banners of virtue,
In time makes their horizon clear.

The trail may sometimes be weary,
Some may die on the field of strife,
But glory be to the soldier brave
Who for victory gives his life.

Let this be our motto forever,
And the weapon of tongue and pen,
If suffer we must for righteousness,
It will make of us better men.

So come, let us dry our burning tears,
With the kerchief of faith and love,
For behold, the mists have rolled away,
And the sunshine falls from above.

Then again with our vision rolling,
Will our hearts be filled with good cheer,
And we'll long for the little cottage,
And the beautiful river dear.

There in our dreams we will view the spot,
And the precious story of life,
While fairy hands scatter roses red,
Upon Heinrich and Heinrich's wife.

CHAPTER VII

When Mildred, with baby grace, opened
Her eyes to the beautiful earth,
The voice of all nature in gladness,
Did proclaim to the world her worth.

When the sun in his golden splendor,
In the east left his hiding place,
His rays in the dawn of the morning,
Were the first to kiss her dear face.

When with manly strength bowed the father,
For the first time to kiss her lips,
There fell a tear of joy from his eyes,
And it moistened her finger tips.

Like a flash the electric current,
From the child to the father came,
And then Heinrich knew that she would
live
To do honor unto his name.

As he knelt by her side that morning,
His face beaming with rays of pride,
He pictured the days when a maiden,
Would gracefully walk by his side.

He pictured a glorious future,
For that tiny humanity,
But he pictured only the shadows,
Of a golden reality.

For sweeter than rosebuds and roses,
And all flowers that speak of love,
Was the shower of divine blessing,
That fell down from the realms above.

A voice seemed to come with the showers,
It was only for Heinrich's ear,
Which said, "Honor and love thy daughter
For thou art her guardian here."

Then it seemed to the youthful parent,
That with music the air was filled,
That a new light was born within him,
And with rapture his soul was thrilled.

And it seemed that the scales had fallen,
From his eyes, which hindered his sight,
He looked upon life in its splendor,
In a newer and grander light.

And methinks I can see him kneeling,
As it were at love's sacred shrine,
I see him clasping a golden cross,
And around it his arms entwine.

There he made a most solemn promise,
As he clung to that cross of truth,
To honor the name of his daughter,
To shield her in innocent youth.

THE AUTHOR MOUNTED ON HIS BEAUTIFUL
HAMBLETONIAN "DAISY"

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